52 Tavistock Square

2nd Feb 39

Dear May Sarton,

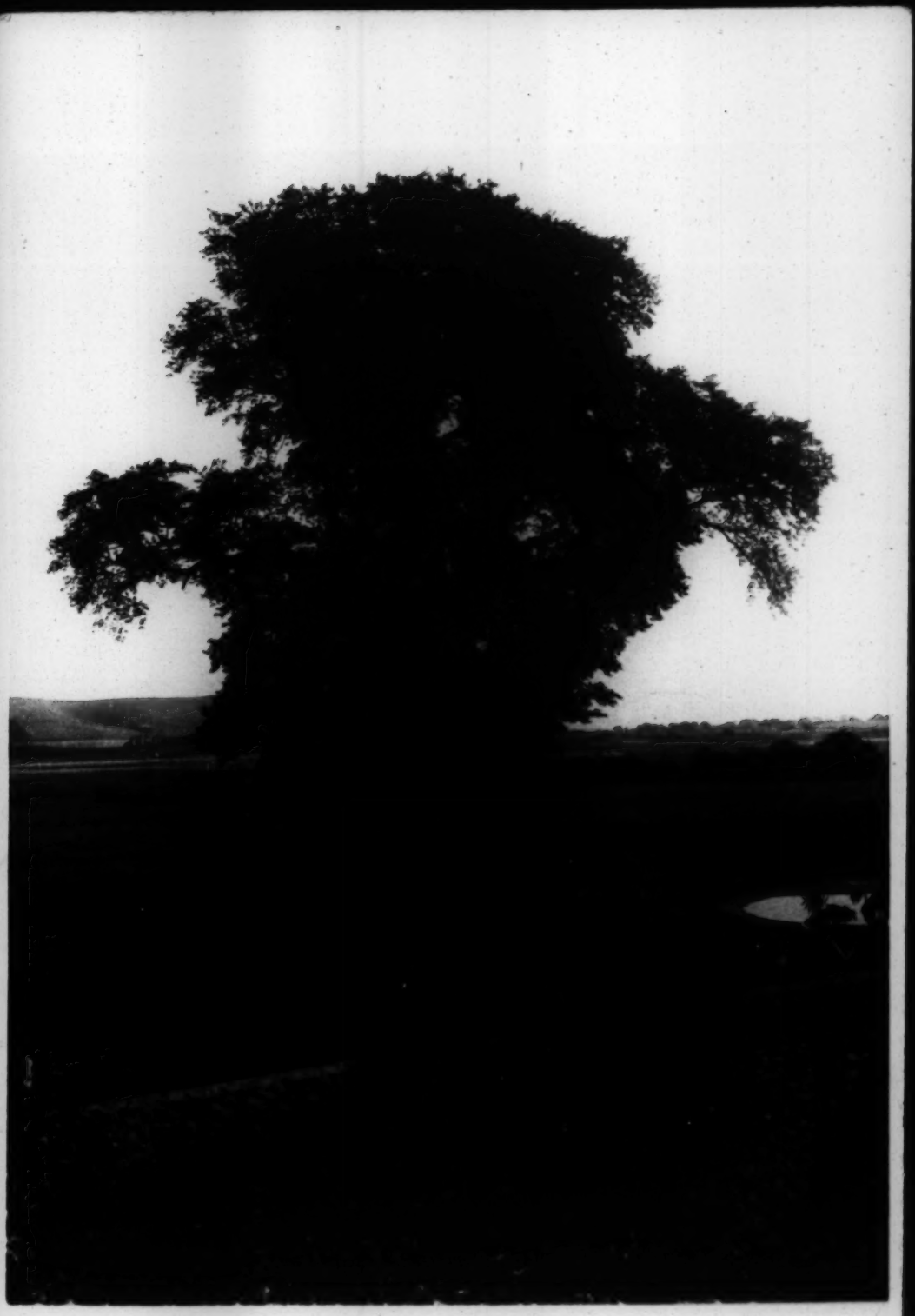
I was glad to get your letter, in spite of te the request you make in it; and in spite of the fact that I have no time to asnwer it. (I am rushing down to the country; and snatch ten minutes off what ought to be my work) About the MS. for the Refugees ~~Freedom~~ society. I am sure it is a good society; but my repulsion from societies is great; still greater my hatred of encouraging writers in their idiotic vanity about their own little doings. I tear up my manucsripts when I have any; but in fact I make such wild sketches in hand writing alter so completely on the type writer that a manuscript of mine is mostly nonsense. And I dont like to sell nonsense; nor do I think it would sell; for no sane person could make head or tail of it. Still, I promise that I will rout among my papers and see if there's some page not too incoherent. If so I'll do violence to my horror of this groping and send it to the address you give.

I'm glad that youre writing poetry; also that your teaching it. I have no recollection of hearing from Mrs Swift or that I ever had a book from her. Please apologise for me, if she accuses me of not thanking her, as I fear she well may. But I think you know, among other ob e ctionable characteristics, my hatred of thanking writers for their books. One can't say what one thinks; But its rude--~~uncilised~~

uncivilised; a Symbol protest against the immense reciprocity required by civilisation. This will help to explain my dumbness about your own poetry; which I will rrad, and say nothing about. In fact, since we had a partner in the Press, two months ago, I gave myself a license to read no modern writing of any kind for one full year. I have been so steeped in modern manuscripts that I was losing all sense that one differed from another. I am reading Chaucer and hope in a year to have recovered my palate. At the moment Auden reads like Spender; Spender like Auden; and neither mean anything. So if I did read you I should only get another confused note in the general clamour; but I hope this will have sorted itself out by next January. As you can imagine, there are so many other things dinning in ones mind here-- war, politics, and an infinite number of different people. I shall be seeing Elizabeth and a young man called Sean o' Faolain next week; wh ch I shall enjoy; and hope to see you when youre over. I'm ashamed to let this scribble cross the Atlantic; but if I dont, then you will give up your last relic of belief in me, which I have some vague wish to preserve.

There are half a dozen snowdrops out in our garden; and we are now driving through the bitter east wind to see them. Best wishes and thanks and apolgies,

Virginia Woolf



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CARTE POSTALE
Communication — Correspondence
Address — Adresse

LONDON. W.C.
9 45AM
25 JLY
1939

24 July. 52. T. S

I'm so sorry — we go
down tomorrow to the
dew pond on the other
side of this card. So I'm
afraid there'll be no
more evenings at 52 T.S.
But I hope you'll come
to 37 Mecklenburgh Sq. W.C.

Miss May Sarton,
35 Rosslyn Hill
N.W.3

POST CARD

CARTE POSTALE

Communication—Correspondance

Address—Adresse

Rodmell. July 29th

Thanks very much for the poems, which I think suit me to the 1940 cellar days. On the other side you will find last Christmas. I'm now making a cake:

V. W.

Miss May Sarton

35 Rosslyn Hill

London.

NW. 3